Beyond Nationalism? Peacebuilding and Religion in Asia

Date: 10:30-17:30, Saturday December 20 2014
Venue: International Conference Room, Kiyoshi Togasaki Memorial Dialogue House, International Christian University (ICU)
Sponsors: Social Science Research Institute (SSRI), ICU, Tokyo, Japan
Co-sponsors: Institute for Global Concern (IGC), Sophia University; PRI (ICU)
Links: http://ssri-igc.com/

Concept Note:

The centenary commemorations of the First World War serve as a stark reminder of the perils of nationalism which have as yet remained unheeded throughout Asia. In a lecture given in Japan as the war unfolded, the Bengali poet and Nobel Laureate Rabindranath Tagore criticized the nation-state and offered a vision of a society independent of it. This symposium seeks to pose the question of what has happened to that vision with special reference to Asia and Europe. Although the spectacular rise of the People’s Republic of China (PRC) and India, along with other members of the BRICS, has constituted a powerful challenge to the hegemony of the West in world politics, the dominant form of political community in contemporary international relations (IR) remains the nation-state. A product of European political history, the nation-state model has been globalized, first coercively through the colonization of much of Asia by European powers, and then subsequently through decolonization.

In Japan, however, the nation-state was adopted after the Meiji Restoration and is widely accepted as a ‘natural’ political community built upon pre-existing ethnic foundations. In recent years, the revival of Japanese ‘ethno-nationalism’ which has remain dormant since the Second World War, and the increasing use of nationalist rhetoric by the PRC has threatened peace and stability in the region. These have come to a head with the territorial disputes over the Senkaku islands which are also claimed by Taiwan. In many ways, the rise of ethno-nationalism in East Asia mirrors the prior emergence of religious nationalism in South Asia with the added danger posed by the possession of nuclear weapons by both India and Pakistan. It remains to be seen what the impact of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and their controversial leader, Narendra Modi, will be on peace and stability in the region.

This symposium, the 34th joint symposium held by SSRI and the Institute for Global Concern (Sophia University), will critically interrogate the prospects for peace in Asia by posing the following question: What can be done to counter the rise of nationalism within Asia and what role, if any, can inter-faith dialogue play in peacebuilding in the region?
Schedule:

10:30-10:40   Opening Remarks:   Prof. Junko HIBIYA (President of ICU)

10:40-11:00   Overview of Symposium: Prof. Giorgio SHANI (Director of SSRI, ICU)

11:00-12:00   First Plenary Session:   Beyond Nationalism? Tagore and Modern India

Keynote Presentation:

Tagore and Critical Nationalism
Prof. Sudipta KAVIRAJ (Professor, Columbia University)

Chair: Prof. Katsuhiko MORI (Professor, ICU)

Discussant: Prof. Giorgio SHANI (Director of SSRI, ICU)

12:00-13:00   LUNCH

13:00-15:00   Second Plenary Session:   Nationalism in Abe’s Japan

Keynote Presentations:

Japanese Politics at the Crossroad and the Future of East Asia:  Coup d’état against the Constitution, Yasukuni Nationalism, and the Task of Peace-building
Prof. Shin CHIBA (Director of PRI, ICU)

History, Politics and Identity in Japan
Prof. Koichi NAKANO (Professor, Sophia University)

Chair: Prof. Toshiro TERADA (Professor, Sophia University)

Discussants:
1. Prof. Masaki INA (Professor, ICU)
2. Prof. Takashi KIBE (Professor, ICU)
15:00-15:15 Coffee Break

15:15-17:15 Nationalism, Religion and Peacebuilding in North-East Asia

Presentations:

**Religious Nationalism with Reciprocal Non-domination: Ahn Changho's Humanitarian Cosmopolitanism**
Prof. Jun-Hyeok KWAK (Associate Professor, Soongsil University, Republic of Korea)

**Moments of Subversion and Resistance: Unintended Consequences of Nationalist/Imperialist Ideas in the Japanese Empire**
Prof. Atsuko ICHIJO (Associate Professor, Kingston University, UK)

**Buddhism, Reason, and Great East Asian Co-prosperity Area: Multiculturalism and Nationalism in the Pre-war Period Japan**
Prof. Kosuke SHIMIZU (Professor, Ryukoku University, Kyoto)

**Two types of Nationalism in Modern Japan: Authoritarian Dictatorship and Narcissistic Aggressiveness**
Prof. Takeshi DEGUCHI (Associate Professor, University of Tokyo)

Chair: Prof. Wilhelm VOSSE (Professor, ICU)

Discussants:
1. Prof. Takashi KIBE (Professor, ICU)
2. Prof. Jae-Jung SUH (Senior Associate Professor, ICU)

17:15-17:25 Joint Prayer:
   1. Prof. Juan Haidar, S.J. (Professor, Sophia University)
   2. Rev. Shoko Kitanaka (ICU) TBC

17:25-17:30 Closing Remarks: Prof. Nina Hasegawa (IGC, Sophia University)
Invited Participants:

Keynote Speakers:
1. Professor Sudipta Kaviraj (Columbia University, USA)
2. Professor Shin Chiba (Director, PRI, ICU)
3. Professor Koichi Nakano (IGC, Sophia University)

Presenters:
1. Professor Kosuke Shimizu (Ryukoku University)
2. Associate Professor Jun-Hyeok Kwak (Soongsil University, Republic of Korea)
3. Associate Professor Atsuko Ichijo (Kingston University, UK)
4. Associate Professor Takeshi Deguchi (University of Tokyo)

Participants:
5. Professor Masaki Ina (SSRI, ICU)
6. Professor Nina Hasegawa (IGC, Sophia University)
7. Professor Takashi Kibe (PRI, ICU)
8. Professor Katsuhiko Mori (SSRI, ICU)
9. Professor Toshiro Terada (IGC, Sophia University)
10. Senior Associate Professor Jae-Jung Suh (SSRI, ICU)
11. Professor Wilhelm Vosse (SSRI, ICU)

Convener:
Senior Associate Professor Giorgio Shani (Director, SSRI, ICU)